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Women and the Work Force; Emphasizing Inequalities World Wide

*For our presentation we chose to study how Eleanor Roosevelt greatly impacted women's working rights. ER, as she often signed her name, began her movement to improve women's working rights when she volunteered at the Rivington Street Settlement house when she was a young girl. This was much to her parent's dismay since she was wealthy, but she still believed it was important to help the less fortunate. Beginning then, she did many amazing things to help women that have greatly impacted us today.

Here's a brief introductory video about Eleanor Roosevelt.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCmMuV-euJg>

"A woman is like a tea bag; you never know how strong she is until you put her in hot water."

-E.R.

Eleanor Roosevelt was a true leader in her field of helping women to gain their rights at work. With her quote, "A woman is like a tea bag..." she was explaining how she believed that women had the potential to pursue the same careers as men.

This quote is a simile comparing a woman to a tea bag, referring to how a tea bag can seem weak, however once it is put in hot water, it spreads and changes the entire water overall. This can connect to women gaining their rights in that up to the 20th century, women were seen as unimportant and only useful for cooking, cleaning, and raising children. However, once you place a woman in "hot water", or a Situation in which she is given the opportunity to display her abilities {work}, she can show her true strengths.

Within Eleanor Roosevelt's Declaration of Human Rights is one right that can specifically be tied to women and their rights in the workplace, along with several other references to women's equality overall. This right is article number 23 which is worker's rights. It includes 4 main points about rights all workers are entitled to.

"a. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment."

"b. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work"

"c. Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy

of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection."

"d. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests."

*By adding women's working rights to human rights, this shows ER's ability to help women in the workplace. It also shows her passion in creating equal opportunities for working women.

1895: *Ritchie v. IL* (Illinois strikes down state hour's law for women as violation of 14th Amendment "freedom of contract")

1900: Women constitute 1/4 of paid labor force (teachers, factory workers, retail trades, agricultural work, clerical work, domestic service)

1920: 19th Amendment (woman suffrage)

1920: Women's Bureau established as permanent branch within Department of Labor

1935: Social Security Act passes, includes AFDC (needs based directed to women and children = welfare); "unemployment insurance" (largely defined women and all-African American out of the "labor supply"; "Old Age Insurance" (exempted almost 1/2 working population; most women excluded; most African American excluded)

1937: *Breedlove v. Suttles* (S Ct upholds GA law imposing lower poll tax for women than for men "in view of the burdens necessarily borne by them [women] for the preservation of the race."

1938: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) passes. Provided for 44 hour work week (to be reduced in 3 years to 40 hours) and req. overtime pay after that; incorporate min. wage (.25/hour) (to be increased over 7

years to .40/hour); prohibited shipment of goods made w/ child labor; applied minimum wage/hours to manufacture of goods at home; forbade classification by sex for wage purposes. But only covered 20% of labor force; excluded: domestic servants; agricultural workers, workers in retail & service industries & food processing, and transportation, all government workers & nonprofit organization workers, and seaman.

1939: 1st Amendments to Social Security Act providing for payments for dependent wives and age widows; intended to shore up legitimacy of act; enhanced benefits of those already covered - mostly white males; did not extend benefits to surviving children of covered women or to aged husbands; aged widowers, or widowed fathers of small children; domestic workers and agricultural workers still not covered.

1948: *Goesaert v. Cleary* upholds the MI law prohibiting women from working as bartenders (unless wife or daughter of male bar owner) against 14th Amendment equal protection challenge on grounds of state interest in protecting morals; so reasonable that "to state the question is in effect to answer it."

1960s: More wage earning women;
of female headed households
increases

1960: President Kennedy
Commission on the Status of
Women

1964: Civil Rights Act (bars discrimination in employment on the basis of "sex")


1972: Social Security amended to provide that widows receive 100%

of husband's benefits

*Now we will be handing out a variety of different fun facts about Eleanor Roosevelt. We will then call on a few people to read their fact aloud. While we are handing them out you may read through this timeline we have put together about many important events in women's history. (Hand out facts) We will now be calling on a few of you to read your fact. There are many repeated facts, so please do not raise your hand to read a fact if it has already been said. Raise your hand if you would like to read your card now.

*In 1961, Eleanor Roosevelt was appointed chairwomen for the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. This prestigious committee was created to advise the late president, Mr. John F. Kennedy on affairs regarding women. Among their topics was women's right in the workplace. This would help women avoid injury and exploitation. Many employers would avoid hiring women all together instead of having to pay women the same wages as men. Because women needed many accommodations in the workplace, it was easier and cheaper to hire men. As a member of a labor union herself, Roosevelt believed that "Everyone who is a worker should join a labor organization."

*Throughout her career, Eleanor Roosevelt greatly helped women to gain their rights, particularly in the workplace. As an incredibly prominent working woman for her time, she was able to change the

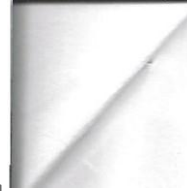


standard of women's roles in politics and work. Roosevelt joined many groups dedicated to helping women gain their rights. Some of these groups included the National Women's Trade Union League, International Congress of Working Women, Women's International League of Peace and Freedom, and the International Ladies Garment Union.

In 1923 The Equal Rights Amendment, written by Alice Paul, was passed. This amendment stated the basic points that women activists wanted. Basically what the Equal Rights Amendment explains is that all U.S. citizens cannot be denied their basic rights based on gender. Until the 1970s, many organized labor unions did not agree with the Equal Rights Amendment. They believed that in addition to equal rights, women also needed protective legislation.

*In 1946 president Truman asked Eleanor Roosevelt to be a delegate of the United Nations. The United Nations goal was to bring nations together to discuss some very basic topics. Eleanor Roosevelt was asked to chair the event. She helped to guide teams of philosophers, lawyers, trade unionists, diplomats, and politicians in creating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

*In 1950 there were around 40 million employed males and only 15 million employed females, which is less than half as many as the men. This was because during that time it was very hard to find a job. People were often very sexist and many people did not hire women. During Eleanor Roosevelt's time women could only have jobs as, teachers, factory workers, retailers, and other simple jobs. Also after they were



married they were immediately fired from their job. For example many people believed that after women were married they were not "pure" enough to be around children so they could not be employed as teachers.

*We have made much progress for women's rights, but there is still much work to do. Earlier in US History, women typically did not work, and were not hired to work. Between 1950 and 1960 women would earn only 60% of the pay that men would get doing the same job. The average woman working full-time as a doctor now would earn almost 80% of what a man makes doing the same job. Although that is not equal to men's pay, due to Eleanor Roosevelt work it is a large improvement.

Now we will be explaining women's rights in the workplace today and some statistics as to how they may be violated all around the world. As these pictures show, women are often paid less than men.

*This chart shows the comparison of a man and a woman working the same job as a doctor. The average woman working full-time as a doctor would earn \$71,292 a year compared to a man working full-time who would earn \$90,168. That means that a man earns an average of \$18,876 more per year, which is about 21% more than a woman would earn. An average citizen works 45 years during their working career. This means that a man would earn an average of \$849,420 more throughout his career than a woman.

* Women make up 40% of the global workforce, yet make less than their male counterparts in every country on Earth. Women



also hold their communities together, yet their work is still not usually valued the same as men's work. Women are not offered the same opportunities, which is part of the reason that their work is not valued like men's. Unfortunately, this causes them to be more likely to be under-educated, employed in unpaid or low wage work, and be poor. In many businesses workers who are female are often denied their rights to regular working hours, equal pay, and safe and non-hazardous work environments.

*In many poor countries, throughout the world, factories and companies rely heavily on women's cheap, unskilled labor. In many of these factories women comprise almost 70% - 90% of the labor. This proves that although Eleanor Roosevelt greatly helped women in the working world, there is still much work that needs to be done. As the next generation we must continue Eleanor Roosevelt legacy of hard work and helping others. Even little things can still have a large impact.

"Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world."

Limited Opportunities

In the world today women are able to pursue almost any work field that they would like. Although they are able to participate in these fields that does not mean they are treated equally. Many women claim they are under a "glass ceiling" of sorts in which they can see their way up, but they are never given the promotion opportunities to do so. Studies have shown that there is a far larger number of men in leading jobs in their fields than there are women. Some of these leading jobs include managers, CEOs, and general head staff. Also women can often be stereotyped for their strengths, not allowing them to go certain places for business or perform certain tasks. There have also been reports of stereotypical treatment of women in so-called "men's work", jobs that are considered by some too strenuous for women to pursue. Many women in these jobs report experiencing resisting treatment from their male colleagues.

Wage Gap: Examples and Explanations

Most families function off two incomes but many rely on a single income. If we apply this to the great wage gap between men and women's earnings we are able to see the way that this can personally affect single parent families. This fact can also explain why over half of those in poverty in the United States are women. The worst part- women can be downgraded merely *because* they are women. For example, a woman who has years of experience may be paid the same


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amount as a newly hired, inexperienced male worker.

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The Positives:

Women have come an incredibly far way in their leadership and opportunities in the workplace thanks to Eleanor Roosevelt and other



Female leaders. Today in many countries women are able to go into just about any work field they desire. Not only this, but the percentage of women in politics is steadily increasing, and in the country of Rwanda almost half of the cabinet members are women! These statistics mean that the future is a time for women to become completely equal to men.

The continuation of Eleanor's legacy starts with you. Unless human rights take meaning to you, than they have little meaning anywhere. Just certain actions towards equality can have a large impact. Eleanor Roosevelt did greatly improve women's working rights, but many new problems have arisen due to the rapidly changing world and technology. That is why it is our job as a younger generation to continue Eleanor Roosevelt's great work in creating equality for men and women in the workplace.

*"The American Dream can no more remain static than can the American nation.... We cannot any longer take an old approach to world problems. They aren't the same problems. It isn't the same world. We must not adopt the methods of our ancestors; instead, we must emulate that pioneer quality in our ancestors that made them attempt new methods for a New World."

There are many different organizations in which you can donate to help women gain their rights. Some of these major organizations include the international Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and the National Organization for Women (NOW) Foundation.

Here are some of the ways you can help:



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Follow different organizations on social media to connect with
- ers who are interested in helping women around the world and hear
"personal stories.

3. Sign up for volunteer work, even if it's not specific to women's rights, but human rights in general.
4. Encourage friends and family to get involved
5. Subscribe to the companies newsletter to hear updates on situations and upcoming events.
6. Attend a local event to learn more about Human Rights.

*Throughout history, and shown in our demonstration, women have become much more prominent in the working world. Where we are now, with 46.8% of workers being women in the United States could never have been possible without the hard work of Eleanor Roosevelt and many other women. Although it is truly incredible how far women have come in the working world today, there is still much work that needs to be done. That is why we need your help in continuing Eleanor Roosevelt's legacy.